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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

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September 28, 2015

TO: Audit Committee

FROM: John Naimo 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **SUNSET REVIEW FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION**

RECOMMENDATION

The Audit Committee recommend to the Board of Supervisors (Board) to extend the Los Angeles County Beach Commission's (Commission) sunset review date to December 31, 2019.

BACKGROUND

The Commission was established on May 25, 1971, under Los Angeles County Code Chapter 2.116.220. The Board approved the most recent sunset review date extension on September 6, 2011.

The Commission advises and makes recommendations to the Board and the Director of the Department of Beaches and Harbors (DBH) on beach-related issues.

The Commission has 20 members, ten appointed by the Fourth District Supervisor, seven appointed by the Third District Supervisor, and one each appointed by the First, Second, and Fifth District Supervisors. Commissioners are experts, laypersons, and spokespersons for groups who have an interest in beach-related issues.

Commission members do not receive stipends or other compensation. DBH provides the Commission with necessary staff support, services, and supplies. DBH estimates annual Commission-related expenditures of approximately \$26,000.

JUSTIFICATION

From January 2012 to March 2015, the Commission held 22 meetings (approximately seven meetings each year). The County Code gives the Commission the authority to decide how often it should meet, and the Commission has determined it should meet monthly, excluding the months of August and December. In addition, the Commission Chair and the Director of DBH are authorized to jointly waive the monthly meetings if there are no items that require the Commission to act upon. Based on the lack of a meeting frequency requirement, we cannot comment on the number of meetings the Commission held during the review period.

For the 22 meetings the Commission held, we noted that an average of 11 (55%) members were present. The Commission recognizes its low average attendance, and is actively working to improve attendance by encouraging Commission members to attend meetings. The Commission will also work with the Board offices to evaluate Commissioner attendance and to fill vacant positions.

Although the Commission had a low average attendance, the Commission successfully fulfilled its duties. During this review period, the Commission's accomplishments included:

- Recommending to the Board to approve DBH's fee revisions (e.g., parking, room rental, etc.) and implement new fees (e.g., docking, youth camps, etc.) for facilities and services provided at Marina del Rey and County-owned, operated, or managed beaches. DBH indicated the fee revisions and new fees will increase revenue by approximately \$1.2 million annually.
- Recommending to the Board that DBH execute license agreements with ten existing or new concessionaires/vendors for the provision of food and beverage concessions and recreational activities (i.e., bicycle and skate rentals and hang gliding rentals/lessons) at County-owned or operated beaches. DBH indicated the license agreements will generate approximately \$447,000 in revenue to the County during the first year of the license agreement term, an approximate \$40,000 increase from the total rents collected in the prior fiscal year.
- Recommending to DBH to adopt revisions to the Beach and Harbor Use License Policy to allow permits for fitness groups, yoga classes, and other small recreational groups to conduct beach activities during non-peak hours of the summer. DBH indicated the revisions generated approximately \$15,000 in additional revenues during the summer of 2014.

For the next evaluation period, the Commission will continue to make recommendations to the Board and the Director of DBH on beach-related issues, such as coastal

preservation, marketing agreements, contracts, water quality, shoreline nourishment, and erosion replenishment programs.

If you have any questions please call me, or your staff may contact Robert Smythe at (213) 253-0100.

JN:AB:RS:TK

Attachment

c: Gary Jones, Director, Department of Beaches and Harbors
Wayne Powell, Chair, Beach Commission
Twila P. Kerr, Chief, Commission Services

COMMISSION SUNSET REVIEW
LOS ANGELES COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION
REVIEW COMMENTS

Mission. Does the mission statement agree with the Board of Supervisors' (Board) purpose and expectations?

The stated mission agrees with the Los Angeles County Beach Commission's (Commission) duty specified in the County Code. **CONCUR.**

Section 1. Relevance. Is the mission still relevant and in agreement with the Board's purpose and expectations?

The Commission advises and makes recommendations to the Board and the Director of the Department of Beaches and Harbors (DBH) on beach-related issues.

The Commission's mission appears to be **RELEVANT.**

Section 2. Meetings and Attendance. Are required meetings held and is attendance satisfactory?

From January 2012 to March 2015, the Commission held 22 meetings (approximately seven meetings each year). The County Code gives the Commission the authority to decide how often it should meet, and the Commission has determined it should meet monthly, excluding the months of August and December. In addition, the Commission Chair and the Director of DBH are authorized to jointly waive the monthly meetings if there are no items that require the Commission to act upon. Based on the lack of a meeting frequency requirement, we cannot comment on the number of meetings the Commission held during the review period. For the 22 meetings the Commission held, we noted that an average of 11 (55%) members were present.

The Commission's attendance is **UNSATISFACTORY.** The Commission recognizes its low average attendance, and is actively working to improve attendance by encouraging Commission members to attend meetings. The Commission will also work with the Board offices to evaluate Commissioner attendance and to fill vacant positions.

Sections 3 and 4. Accomplishments and Results. Are listed accomplishments and results significant?

During this review period, the Commission's accomplishments included:

- Recommending to the Board to approve DBH's fee revisions (e.g., parking, room rental, etc.) and implement new fees (e.g., docking, youth camps, etc.)

for facilities and services provided at Marina del Rey and County-owned, operated, or managed beaches. DBH indicated the fee revisions and new fees will increase revenue by approximately \$1.2 million annually.

- Recommending to the Board that DBH execute license agreements with ten existing or new concessionaires/vendors for the provision of food and beverage concessions and recreational activities (i.e., bicycle and skate rentals and hang gliding rentals/lessons) at County-owned or operated beaches. DBH indicated the license agreements will generate approximately \$447,000 in revenue to the County during the first year of the license agreement term, an approximate \$40,000 increase from the total rents collected in the prior fiscal year.
- Recommending to DBH to adopt revisions to the Beach and Harbor Use License Policy to allow permits for fitness groups, yoga classes, and other small recreational groups to conduct beach activities during non-peak hours of the summer. DBH indicated the revisions generated approximately \$15,000 in additional revenues during the summer of 2014.

The Commission's accomplishments and results are **SIGNIFICANT**.

Section 5. Objectives. Are the objectives compatible with the mission and goals and relevant within the current County environment?

For the next evaluation period, the Commission will continue to make recommendations to the Board and the Director of DBH on beach-related issues, such as coastal preservation, marketing agreements, contracts, water quality, shoreline nourishment, and erosion replenishment programs.

The Commission's future objectives appear **RELEVANT**.

Section 6. Resources. Are the resources utilized by the entity in support of the entity's activities warranted in terms of the accomplishments and results?

Commission members do not receive stipends or other compensation. DBH provides the Commission with necessary staff support, services, and supplies. DBH estimates annual Commission-related expenditures of approximately \$26,000.

The Commission's expenses appear to be **WARRANTED**.

Section 7. Recommendation.

EXTEND THE SUNSET REVIEW DATE FOR THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY BEACH COMMISSION TO DECEMBER 31, 2019.